

## 151915

25X1

DATE DISTR. 2 February 1948

NO. OF PAGES 14

25X1

NO. OF ENCLS. . . 1  
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

25X1

25X1

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE ACT, 50 U.S.C., 31 AND 32, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED, HOWEVER, INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN MAY BE REPRODUCED OR TRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY MEANS WHEN SO AUTHORIZED BY WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE RECEIVING AGENCY.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION FOR THE RESEARCH  
USE OF TRAINED INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS

25X1

25X1

1. Q. Now let's hear about the camps.
  - A. Well, the camps are organized very much like a military organization. I shall speak especially about my camp, the Pechora prison, with the secret number AA-1. The headquarters in Moscow for all prisoner slave labor camps is named GULAG. This is a section of the MVD which runs all prison camps.
2. Q. How does GULAG fit in with MVD and MGB?
  - A. Pechora camp is under the GUZhDS, which is the GULAG section in charge of railroad camps. The commander of GUZhDS was Gen Frenkel. There is also a section that takes care of mine work, and a section for farm camps. They are all connected with MVD. For instance, the name of our camp was Pechora Prison MVD. This camp stretches out over 486 km from the southwestern to the northeastern end of the Pechora railroad, from Kozhva to Vorkuta. (Map of Area is enclosed with this report.) The camp is sub-divided into units, somewhat like regiments. The camp commandant is in the central region. He wears an MVD uniform. His title is Special Major, MVD. He has three or four assistant commandants, all officers of the MVD. Every assistant commandant has a few different sections -- food section, an engineer section, dairy farm section, transport section, finance section, food section -- in all, 10 or 12 sections. Every camp also has an MVD guard section. When I was there, the commandant of the Pechora was a Col Barrowitzki. The one before him was Uspenski.
3. Q. Is Gen Frenkel the head of all the northern camps?
  - A. Maj Gen Frenkel is the head of the GUZhDS, which controls all railroad camps. Maj Part was head of the transport section at Pechora, Maj Falkenstein was head of four or five sections. Maj Artonomoff was head of the personnel section.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

[illegible]

**CONFIDENTIAL**

REFERENCE CENTER LIBRARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2003/11/21 : CIA-RDP80-00809A000500840138-5X1

- 2 -

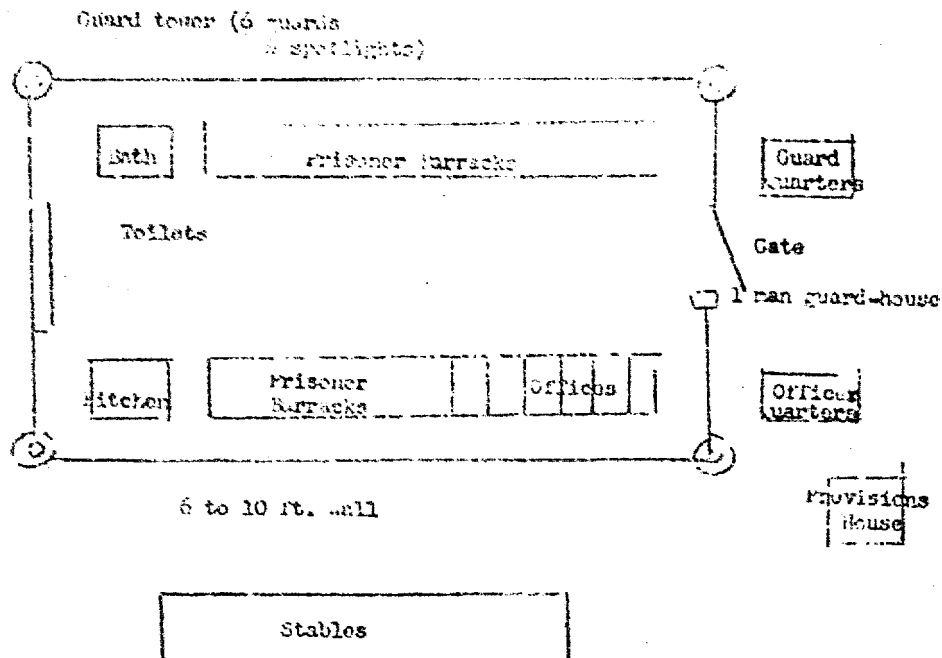
4. Q. The Communist Party, I presume, has its own organization within the camp?
- A. No. That is, the camp commander and his assistant commandants are usually members of the Communist Party. But this is not always so. The assistant commandant, for instance, was a former convict, and therefore not able to join the party.
5. Q. Is the head of the guards also an ex-prisoner?
- A. No, although in 1945 and 1946 some ex-prisoners were used as guards. However, they were not supplied with firearms, just sticks. These were only criminal prisoners, of course. Usually the camp commander is a free man, but in 1943 many commanders were former prisoners. The camp I am talking about had a commandant who came from Finland, who had been sentenced for such things as speculation and hooliganism. Under this commandant there are different sections, such as bookkeeper, an economist, and a man who directs the prisoners, more or less as a foreman. Then there is an assistant commandant for the food, kitchen and baking, a nurse, and a medical post. Of course, there is the guard section with a number of guards equal to 10% of the number of prisoners.
6. Q. But does the camp have a special section from the LVD that supervises the officers of the camp? In other words, is there a little supervisory section sent there by the party?
- A. Yes. There is a commissar in the camp, and everybody is under control of the commissar. This political commissar checks up on all the officers in the camp, just like the political commissars in the army. He holds political conferences. He controls the work of the camp. Everybody, from the commandant on down, is under the control of the commissar. The commissar, so to speak, constitutes a little Politburo. If the commandant does something which is not in keeping with the party line, the "secretary" writes back to Moscow, and the commandant is called back. The commissar is a representative of the Politburo in Moscow.
7. Q. If a question comes up, such as building a railroad and how many men you need to do it, is this decided by the chief of the camp or the commissar?
- A. It is decided by the chief of the camp and his decision is approved by the commissar.
8. Q. So any rule or regulation has to be approved by the commissar. Is that right?
- A. Well, it is decided in a conference.
9. Q. Was there much jealousy between the commissar and the commandant?
- A. That depended entirely on the personalities. As commandant of the camp, the commandant was the highest person, but as a party member he was under the control of the commissar. Usually the relation was all right since both were Communists. However, if the commissar did not like the commandant he only had to write a letter back to Moscow and the commandant would be recalled. So, in the last analysis, the party secretary always has the final say.
10. Q. Does the LVD have secret informants among the prisoners?
- A. Yes.
11. Q. How many?
- A. I never could find out.
12. Q. Would any of the political prisoners be used for such an informant's job?
- A. No, only the criminal prisoners would be used.
13. Q. Did you see any prisoners in the camp who were former NKVD men?
- A. They would never tell you they had been in the NKVD.
14. Q. You might have met some soldiers from NKVD troops?

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2003/11/21 : CIA-RDP80-00809A000500840138-4

- 3 -

- A. Yes. They never tell you this because the prisoners shouldn't talk about such things.
15. Q. Do you know to what unit the MVD guards belong?
- A. Yes. I knew these people were soldiers of the army and belonged to the commandant.
16. Q. Do you know the number of the unit?
- A. No. I don't know.
17. Q. Were living conditions for camp officials pretty good?
- A. Yes. They have everything special for them. They had very nice homes and good food.
18. Q. Did they wear a uniform?
- A. Yes. Everyone in Russia liked uniforms very much.
19. Q. Tell me about the camp itself. What sort of living quarters did you have?
- A. The enclosures held 250 men and are all built this way:



20. Q. How about the organization of the camps?

A. Camps are divided into many units. Our camp had five units: one in Pechora, the second in Kas-Yu, the third in Kochmen, the fourth in Sivaya Luska, and the fifth in Kharovoy. A unit had eight to 15 thousand laborers. Every unit has the same sections as the main camp, depending on how many jobs there are. Mostly the heads of those

CONFIDENTIAL  
CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

151915

- 4 -

sections are ex-convicts, who 10 years ago were free and did not want to go back to the big cities. The units are divided into sub-camps of 200 to 300 laborers, each with a territory of about 200 km along the railroad. About 1940, the political and the criminal prisoners were separated, and the foreign prisoners were separated from the Russian prisoners, but later all were put together again. In 1947, about 70% were political prisoners. Many came from Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland when the war ended.

21. Q. Were many prisoners released from the camps to go to the army during the war?
  - A. In 1942 a mobilization was started. Only criminal prisoners could go to the army, except bandits, and prisoners who had been convicted of stealing from the Government under a paragraph enacted in 1932. Of course, everybody wanted to go.
22. Q. What was the average age of the political prisoners?
  - A. Between 40 and 65. There were some women, mostly young, from Lithuania and Latvia.
23. Q. Did the women live and work in the same camps as the men?
  - A. No, there were special female camps. In a female camp there are about 200 women and about 25 to 30 men. And then, of course, there are three or four women in every men's camp to work at the bath and in the kitchen. Most of the women work at the dairy farm.
24. Q. How old was the youngest prisoner?
  - A. The youngest was 14. They got easy jobs in the kitchen or something like that. The young prisoners are usually criminal prisoners. The youngest political prisoner was a woman of 18 from Latvia.
25. Q. Did they generally shoot the spies?
  - A. Usually the death sentence was changed to 10 years at hard labor.
26. Q. Now, about political prisoners. Were they from all parts of the Soviet Union?
  - A. Yes, but there were more from the Ukraine, White Russia, Byelorussia and the Baltic states, and from the occupation zones for collaborating with the Germans. I also met the Russian prisoners who had been captured in the Finnish War. When they were liberated by their own troops, they were sentenced to five years at hard labor for having been taken prisoner.
27. Q. Were most of the political prisoners above average intelligence?
  - A. Yes, many were professors, teachers, engineers, or physicians, and most of them were convicted of speaking against the Soviet Government -- paragraph 58/10 -- or of Paragraph 58/7 -- economic counter-revolution -- which usually meant that they were big directors and had made some mistake in their factory control.
28. Q. What kind of statements did they arrest them for?
  - A. I knew an old servant from Kursk, and I asked him what he was arrested for. He said, "Nothing at all. I just remarked that I didn't think these community farms were such a good idea. That's all. The next thing I knew, I was convicted and sentenced to 10 years at hard labor."
29. Q. Do you know of any prisoners who were convicted of organizing anti-Soviet groups? Do you believe that there are any organized anti-Soviet groups in the USSR?
  - A.

CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

25X1

151915

- A. No, except possibly in the Caucasus. Many of the eskimos who were called to the army in 1942 escaped to the countryside, but most of them were later arrested. And there was the Ukrainian resistance movement -- but I know very little about these matters.
30. Q. Did you ever notice that any of the prisoners came from one and the same subversive organizations, or had known each other before they came into camp? Especially, of course, as far as political prisoners are concerned?
- A. No.
31. Q. Did you find many prisoners who were arrested because they were sympathetic with America or England?
- A. Yes -- people who were convicted under Paragraph 58-4, association with the bourgeoisie -- especially writers and journalists.
32. Q. Did you know any prisoners who had been in America or England as diplomats or official functionaries?
- A. No, but there were many Finnish citizens.
33. Q. What do you think was the main feeling of these Russian prisoners toward the USSR Government and the Soviet system?
- A. Well, as I said yesterday, in no country in the world are there so many anti-Communists as in Russia.
34. Q. What do you think is the total number of prisoners in Russia today?
- A. I cannot say exactly, but I have heard most of the time that there were between 25 and 35 million.
35. Q. How many prisoners do you feel fairly certain are in the Pechora area?
- A. In 1941, there were about 200 thousand. In 1943, 115 thousand were left because one part went to the army. Another part went to the South; that is, they were evacuated because they were shipbuilding people.
36. Q. About what percentage died those years?
- A. In 1941, through 1944, about 30 thousand people out of 200 thousand. Most of them died of scurvy and pellagra.
37. Q. When prisoners died, was there an investigation?
- A. Yes. Every prisoner was examined by a physician when he died, to see what the cause of death was. This is standard practice for every prisoner and every animal that dies.
38. Q. Did any prisoners escape, that you know of?
- A. Many tried, but most of them were shot by guards. Especially in 1942, when I was working on the river Pechora in the penal battalion, many tried to escape but almost all were killed. It is practically impossible to get away. Without food and clothing, there is nothing one can do. Furthermore, in the tundra you can move only along the railroad and this is guarded very heavily.
39. Q. How did they catch them?
- A. They used police dogs. Every camp had a police dog. Every group of 20 men was guarded by two soldiers and a police dog.
40. Q. Did you ever see any of the dogs attacking the prisoners?

151915

41. Q. What was the ration of food for prisoners who did work?
- A. For prisoners who worked at difficult work there was 700 grams of bread, 25 grams of oatmeal, two grams of sugar, and 100 grams of fish -- mostly salt fish. If somebody worked more than 100% of his quota he got more food. The guards got the prisoners up at five o'clock in the morning. Breakfast consisted of bread, soup, and salt fish, in quantities according to the kind of work you did. Most prisoners had to cut about four cubic meters of wood; this constituted their quota. If they did more, for instance 125%, the economist computed the percentage and the next day more food was issued in accordance with his percentage. The prisoners used to work in groups of 25 to 30 under a foreman. This foreman showed how the work should be done; he did not work himself, but only supervised. The regular ration of food changed every year. Before the war it was a little better, then it became worse and towards the end of the war it became better again. The worker who made 100% of his quota received per day 700 grams of bread, 125 grams of corn or oats, 120 grams of fish, 2 grams of oil, 2 grams of sugar, and 600 grams of vegetables, usually turnips. In the morning one got all the bread, a liter of soup from the corn, and 100 grams of fish. In the evening you got soup and vegetables.
42. Q. What did you eat for lunch?
- A. ~~Laughter~~ People don't eat lunch. In the summer when the days are so long we sometimes did get lunch. Usually it was soup made of cabbage or turnips.
43. Q. You mentioned dairy farms. Who got all the milk and butter?
- A. In 1941, when this camp began, they had 120 cows. In the winter we had very little milk, and in the summer the milk would often turn sour because of bad transportation. The milk went to the railroad for civilian workers -- for children, mostly. In Russia if you don't work you don't eat.
44. Q. How long did you work?
- A. In the winter we worked eight hours. In the summer we worked 12 hours.
45. Q. How large a percentage of the workers made their quota?
- A. I cannot tell you exactly; that depended on the group. Usually about half made their quota or went over. This also depended on the kind of work they had to do. On the railroad in the winter it was very hard to make 100% because the ground was frozen. Good commandants usually tried to have their workers in good physical condition so that they could fulfill their quota and the commandant could make a good showing.
46. Q. If the workers were sick for a week and could not make their norm, what would the guards do? Did they ever beat the workers?
- A. The guards never touched the workers. If you did not want to work, the foreman told the head of the guard unit when you came back to the camp at night and you were taken to the isolation cell. This is a small place made of wood, with no heat. The food was two one-liter bowls of soup and some black bread. All your clothes, except underclothes, were taken away.
47. Q. How long did they leave you in isolation?
- A. That depended on how long you refused to work. The camp commandant would come by every day and ask whether you had changed your mind. Usually the longest time in isolation was 10 days. After that you were taken out, interrogated by an LVD officer, and usually sentenced under Paragraph 58-40 to another three years at hard labor for sabotage. It was possible to receive another sentence while still serving the first one. For instance, while I was in the Urals, many of my horses died of hunger. I was taken to a penal colony and sentenced to be sentenced to another 10 years; this sentence, however, did not materialize.

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

- 7 -

151915

46. Q. Is the work heavier in the penal battalion?
- A. The work is harder and the discipline is very stiff.
47. Q. Was there any physical punishment or torture of the workers, except this isolation treatment?
- A. No, it was forbidden to touch the prisoners. However, this prohibition is not always enforced and sometimes the foreman, who is usually a criminal prisoner, beats his wards if they don't want to go to work. Once I was almost shot when I shoved the guard who had given me a push when I was trying to enter the camp. However, the head guard knew me and the accident was prevented. They did put me into isolation, however.
50. Q. Did the prisoners talk much among themselves about the reason they were imprisoned?
- A. Oh yes, they talked about this quite a bit, and about political conditions. They were all expecting America to invade Russia.
51. Q. What did they expect to happen when America got there?
- A. They all hoped that they would be freed.
52. Q. Many of the prisoners were friendly toward the Americans?
- A. All of them. You remember those 200 Russian officers who were imprisoned in New York because they did not want to go back to Russia? Two of those were in my camp. They were lieutenants, and both of them had been sentenced for 10 years.
53. Q. How did they happen to get to your camp?
- A. They were from the Vlassov army and were captured by the Americans and interned in New York. Finally they were returned to Russia, and two of them ended up in my camp.
54. Q. What did the educated prisoners hope for, eventually? What kind of a system did they really want?
- A. Democracy.
55. Q. Did they ever discuss what kind of government was best for Russia?
- A. Yes, they all thought a democratic government could be easily established in Russia.
56. Q. Do you think that democracy, as we know it, could work in Russia?
- A. Yes, it could be worked out, but everyone is so corrupt and there are so many speculators there. It would be necessary to teach them honesty first.
57. Q. What did most people think of Stalin? Did they blame Stalin for the circumstances?
- A. Everybody blames Stalin, and most of them hope that he will die.
58. Q. Who did they hope would succeed Stalin?
- A. I never heard them say anything about this. All Communists are alike but I think that most expected Zhdanov.
59. Q. How about Molotov?
- A. No, Molotov is just a little man.

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

151915

60. Q. Who are the most popular men in Russia?
- A. Nobody in the Communist Party, but the field marshals were very popular. Zhdenov is now commander in Odessa and Rokossovsky is in Caucasus. These marshals were popular because the Russians are a military people.
61. Q. What groups in Russia do you think are the most anti-Soviet?
- A. Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians, and the Baltic people.
62. Q. Is there any anti-Soviet feeling among the Communist Party members?
- A. I think so, because the Communist Party members are always afraid.
63. Q. How about the army?
- A. I don't know. I wasn't in the army, but the army sympathized with the prisoners. Some people from 160th Construction Company working on the railroad in the Murmansk region came to my camp and told us that the soldiers used to throw food packages and cigarettes to them. That was, of course, because practically every family has a member in a prison camp somewhere, and the soldiers never knew but that their father, or mother, or brother, or sister, were among the group. You see, in Russia there are three kinds of people: those who are in prisoner camps, those who have been in prisoner camps, and those who are going to be in prisoner camps.
64. Q. Is any member of the Politburo more popular than others?
- A. No.
65. Q. Were Communist Party members ever sent to prison camps?
- A. Many of them came to our camp, and many of them went to camps scattered over the USSR. However, there are some camps which are especially for the very long term ex-party members.
66. Q. What were the army officers convicted of?
- A. Many of them were convicted of anti-Soviet propaganda, criticizing any aspect of Russia, and many of them were convicted of discipline violations. These discipline violations consisted of overstaying leave time by one or two days, which brought on a sentence of 10 years of hard labor. All these military convictions were under Paragraph 193; thus, by looking at the files, one can always recognize former army personnel because they are convicted under Paragraph 193.
67. Q. What did you do after work?
- A. In the winter we worked from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. When we came home we cooked supper and went into the barracks.
68. Q. Did they have classes, political lectures, or any other recreation?
- A. Very seldom. All groups went into the barracks. Each barrack contains from four to five groups; that is, from 100 to 125 people. There were no mattresses or comforts of that kind in the barracks.
69. Q. How about information in the camps -- did you have any?
- A. Yes, there was a cultural director in every camp who saw to it that newspapers arrived, and had to go into the barracks and read the paper to the prisoners. He also had to take care of the letters which the prisoners wrote home.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2003/11/21 : CIA-RDP80-00809A000500840138-4

- 9 -

25X1

151915

70. Q. How did those who were in executive positions, such as the bookkeeper, the doctor, or the veterinarian, get into those positions?
- A. All prisoners are sent to a collection camp when they arrive in Pechora and screened. If the demand for a certain specialist exists he is sent to Abex and from there assigned to the unit that needs him.
71. Q. Are there more specialists among the foreign prisoners, or are there more among the Russians?
- A. There are more among the Russians. It is much harder to obtain specialist ratings if you are a foreigner than if you are a Russian.
72. Q. Did politics help you get a special job?
- A. It was a matter of your previous experience, not a matter of political affiliations or sympathies. These were hardly ever mentioned, since everyone knew that it made no difference what one said while one was in the camp. The commanders were very much aware that anyone would profess to be a Communist if he thought for a moment that it would help him get out of the camp. This was especially true in the Pechora camp, where there were about 50% political prisoners, of whom 95% used to be professional workers, and where the other 50% consisted of people from collective farms, who had stolen or robbed. Politics were hardly ever mentioned, and specialists got their jobs because of their qualifications. By "educated people" I mean those who could read a newspaper intelligently, and who could talk about politics sensibly. These political prisoners, of course, had nothing good to expect from the commandant or the KVD. They kept very quiet and never tried to talk themselves into jobs by professing a change of heart.
73. Q. What did you and most of the other prisoners think would have happened if America had not sent material aid? Do you still think the Soviet Union would have won the war?
- A. Yes.
74. Q. Did most of the prisoners hope that Germany would win the war?
- A. Ninety-five percent. You see, if you lose 10 years of your life, your only hope is to get out. Our only hope of getting out was when and if the Germans won the war.
75. Q. Do most of the prisoners want another war?
- A. Everybody hopes for one.
76. Q. What would the prisoners do if there were a war between Russia and America?
- A. If America would undertake to arm and organize the prisoners in the northern regions it would be rather easy to form an army from among them.
77. Q. But these criminal prisoners could not be organized into an army, could they?
- A. With a bottle of vodka and a loaf of bread, they could all be made to fight and would go to the end of the world.
78. Q. But why didn't any of the prisoners mutiny?
- A. In 1942 two camps with about 500 prisoners overpowered their guards, killed their commandant, and escaped. But where could they go? They had no food, no clothing, no fuel. After some time a brigade of guards caught them and killed them all.
79. Q. Do you think the guards or any of the officials feel sympathetic toward the prisoners?
- A. Yes, the guards sometimes begin to like the prisoners, but every morning they receive a "pop talk" against the prisoners from their commandant.

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2003/11/21 : CIA-RDP80-00809A000500840138-4

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

10

151945

During the war many of the guards were older people who felt very sorry for the prisoners and were kind to them. The Mongols, and generally the younger guards, are not so kind. The Mongols and the Caucasians are the worst guards. There were many Mongols and not so many Caucasians.

80. Q. Is there much curiosity within the country about what happens in other countries?
- A. I do not know since I never talked to free civilians, but I think that Stalin made two great mistakes during this war. The first one was to show the Russians the outside world, and the other one was to show the outside world to the Russians.
81. Q. Do you think that the Government is succeeding in changing the younger generation with its Communist propaganda?
- A. The youths get fine Communist instruction but are not very enthusiastic about it because they do not have enough to eat. Here is an example of the standard of living of a free man who was working in the northern region near our camp. He was a former professor who had been sentenced for three years and had decided to stay on in the camp as a free man after his sentence had been finished. He was an ex-Communist and knew that if he returned to the region where he used to live he would be picked up again on the slightest provocation and given another prison term. This man earned one thousand rubles per month, but because of the government savings bonds which he was obliged to buy, he actually received 650. He had to spend at least 20% of his pay on war bonds. Every month he had to spend 75 rubles for 21 kg of bread, 12 rubles for 1 1/2 kg of rice, about 120 rubles for 1.6 kg of butter, 31 rubles for two kg of sugar, 250 rubles for seven kg of meat, 36 rubles for 18 kg of vegetables, and 27 rubles for 15 liters of milk. That leaves him about 200 rubles for clothes, room, and amusement -- and he is still hungry.
82. Q. What is it that people resent most in Russia today? The lack of freedom or the low living standards, or what?
- A. People do not worry about their freedom, their living standard is all that counts.
83. Q. Has the living standard improved in the last three years?
- A. Yes, it has gone up. When it goes up more, people will begin to think about their freedom.
84. Q. Did you ever hear of any Russian listening to the American broadcasts?
- A. No, none at all.
85. Q. What kind of programs do you think the prisoners would be most interested in hearing?
- A. They want to hear that they will be free soon. That is the best thing you can tell them. They are most interested in hearing that they will be free of Communism.
86. Q. Do many of them know about America? Are they interested in it?
- A. Everybody.
87. Q. Despite all the propaganda against America, do the people still have confidence in the capitalistic system?
- A. Your own propaganda is very bad. I was surprised to see that movie, "Song of Russia," because it was a pro-Russian picture made by Metro-Goldwyn. You see, in 1943 the provisions that came to the camp were from America and we could imagine how the people in America lived when they could produce such provisions.
88. Q. But all the propaganda must have some influence on the Russian people.
- A. No, when they read the newspapers they believe just the opposite of what the papers say.
89. Q. But that is only the newspaper people, is it not?

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

- 11 -

151915

- A. Yes, that is true. But it is also the veterans, who are very dissatisfied with the treatment they are getting upon becoming civilians. They cannot find jobs, and those that come back disfigured receive no help or compensation from the Government.
90. Q. What do the veterans think about going back to the collective farms? What happens to them if they say: "I don't want to go back to a collective farm; it is no good?"
- A. If they say such things, there is Paragraph 58-10 and they go to prison for three years for anti-Soviet agitation.
91. Q. Have you any way of knowing the feeling of the civilian population?
- A. I have a veterinary friend who was a party member and who said that although he liked being a Communist he would rather be a capitalist and go to America.
92. Q. What do you think is the chief reason for the large number of prisoners?
- A. The Government needs a cheap labor supply. It very often happens that within a certain region the MVD chief is ordered to supply a certain number of prisoners for a certain project. He then goes out and makes the arrests. For instance, when the great constructions were going on along the Amur and near Lake Baikal, people used to be taken out of their homes at night and transported to prison camps without further ado after being sentenced for some fictitious reason. The Caucasians were usually sent to the Far East and to special camps in the Far North.
93. Q. Did you ever meet any P.W.'s from Germany?
- A. Yes, in 1944 we received two companies of German railroad workers and one company of truck drivers but they did not last very long because the climate was too severe. The truck drivers were used to drive wood from the forest to the railroad. This process was continued even after the railroad was finished because the road-bed keeps sinking into the tundra. This constant reinforcement of the railroad was accomplished without interference with the traffic. Most of the reconstruction was done in the summer.
94. Q. Was any of the wood shipped to central Russia?
- A. No. The wood was not of very good quality and was used solely for railroad building and fuel.
95. Q. Did you ever find any Communist youth organizations working in the repair shops along the railroad as free men?
- A. No, all the people in those shops were old people and prisoners. The prisoners had to do all the manual labor, while the free people were usually in administrative jobs.
96. Q. What was the opinion of the prisoners about Japan?
- A. Japan was not popular among the prisoners because the Mongols, who were the worst guards, came from the Far East and looked like Japanese.
97. Q. What was the opinion about England? Was it more or less popular than the US among prisoners?
- A. America was by far the most popular of all. But people don't talk much about those matters. When one Russian meets another it is usually "What did you have to eat today? How much bread did you get yesterday? What are you going to eat tomorrow? Where can I get an extra package of cigarettes?" etc.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

- 12 -

151915

98. Q. What can you tell us about the cities? What is imported into the cities, and what is exported, to where?
- A. Well, to start with Vorkuta. It is built of wooden buildings. The population consists of many ex-convicts, many Russian-Germans who escaped to this place to work in the mines, and engineers who came to work on the railroad. Many of the people including veterans, came because the provisions in the North Arctic were considerably better than the provisions in the south. And then, of course, there are the prisoners, who work in chain-gangs in Vorkuta. Nevertheless, Vorkuta is one of the best equipped cities of the north. I have seen drawings of the theater there, and it is better than many theaters in the interior. Also, the food for the prisoners is better, because they work in the mines. All products from the dairy farms in this area go to Vorkuta.
99. Q. Was there ever an organization formed among the prisoners, such as an anti-fascist group, or something similar?
- A. There was no time for such play. The only thing that the prisoners are supposed to do is work, work, work.
100. Q. Did you ever hear about the condition in PW camps?
- A. Yes, my brother was a PW, and it seems that conditions in the PW camps were much better than in the Russian slave labor camps.
101. Q. Are there any big warehouses in Vorkuta?
- A. Not that I have heard of. I rather doubt that such things exist there.
102. Q. To come back on the PW camps, did you ever hear of any PW's being sent back to Germany, after they had been thoroughly indoctrinated in their camps in Russia?
- A. I am afraid that I do not know about such things.
103. Q. What other important cities are there?
- A. The only other city of importance was Abex, where all provisions for the prisoners are warehoused. All these cities are of one-story buildings.
104. Q. Could you tell us about any new towns established in this northern region?
- A. Since 1939 no large new towns have been established. Vorkuta is the largest and newest town, and it was completed around 1930. There are innumerable Eskimo villages along the river, each consisting of approximately 30 to 40 houses with about 200 people in each town. These Eskimos live mainly by hunting and animal breeding. There are also some villages along the Pechora river, composed of people who had been exiled from Russia about 1930.
105. Q. Are the collective farms and the villages separate entities?
- A. Yes, they are separate, but have very good relations with each other. There are no bad feelings between the Eskimo villages and collective farms.
106. Q. Is there any private farming going on up there? Is there any evidence of hoarding?
- A. No. Of course, some people were evacuated to this area in 1944 and 1945, but they later returned to their homes and other parts of Russia.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

25X1

- 13 -

151915

107. Q. What is the ratio between the men and the women on these collective farms?
- A. That differs. During the war there were usually more women on the farms because the men had gone into the army. It is my experience in Russia that women do more work, and work harder, than men, especially on the collective farms. Women take care of the cattle, sow the crops, and reap the harvest. Women do everything; they even go into the forest and cut wood.
108. Q. Do the Russians who live in these areas look down on the Eskimos? Do they ever marry Eskimos?
- A. They do not intermarry, but they do not look down on the Eskimos.
109. Q. Were there any signs of anti-Semitism in this area?
- A. No, there are hardly any Jews.
110. Q. What crops are raised on the collective farms?
- A. Turnips, potatoes, wheat, and barley.
111. Q. Was enough food raised in that region for the population?
- A. No, concentrates for the cattle and vegetables for the people are imported. The Eskimos live mainly on raw fish, raw reindeer meat, and turnips. Fishing in this area is very good, and I wouldn't be surprised if after some capital investment it would turn into one of the highest fish-producing states of the Soviet Union.
112. Q. How many people live in this whole Komi ASSR?
- A. About 800 thousand Eskimos and a million and a half prisoners.
113. Q. How many people are there in Vorkuta?
- A. About 60 thousand. In 1941 they brought many Germans from the Volga, especially to the forest. Conditions were terrible. Others came from the occupation zone because in the winter night the work was better than in Russia. The food ration was larger and the people had more chance, especially the railroad workers. An engineer earned two or three times more money.
114. Q. Did you have any insect problem for humans?
- A. Yes. Lice and mosquitoes were plenty. Mosquitoes were especially bad from 15 May to 15 July.
115. Q. How did you fight mosquitoes?
- A. We just wore masks and gloves.
116. Q. Never a spray or anything like that?
- A. No, never.
117. Q. Did the Russians attempt to stop mosquito breeding by oil, etc.?
- A. No. I didn't see anything of that kind. After a rain we always had more mosquitoes.
118. Q. Did they provide the prisoners with warm clothes?
- A. The prison life was very bad. In 1941, 1942, and 1943, we got old clothes from the army. Many of the workers went out and froze their feet. Of 200 thousand prisoners, we lost 50 thousand.

CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

Approved For Release 2003/11/21 : CIA-RDP80-00809A000500840138-4

- 14 -

25X1

151915

119. Q. What is the best clothing to wear in the winter?
- A. Felt boots are vitally necessary.
120. Q. Why not leather?
- A. Leather is not good. It lets the humidity through. The best trousers are made from cotton. I recommend waterproof cotton cloth which would not let water through, like the ones I have seen American soldiers wear. The Russians used cotton between linen cloth. I do not recommend socks, but linen material that you wrap around your feet and legs over which the felt boots are drawn. For more insulation you pad the boots with paper. Deer skin, full-length boots with fur on the outside are used by the Komi natives -- those aren't good for working. They are very warm and best used when traveling, but they don't wear as well.
121. Q. What kind of a hat do you wear?
- A. Fur caps are essential.
122. Q. And your gloves?
- A. We never had good gloves. Fur or wool skin of elbow-length were used. The fingers were all together.
123. Q. How did you protect your face?
- A. For the face, masks are not good because the skin is not adjusted to the cold and is subject to frostbite. I like good woolen scarfs best to protect the face.
124. Q. How would you breathe?
- A. The Komi taught me to breathe through the nose only, and occasionally puff out my cheeks. Why, I don't know.
125. Q. What kind of outer coats do you recommend?
- A. Long overcoats are not good; they hinder movement through the snow. Short jackets are preferable.
126. Q. What piece of clothing is most important in the summer?
- A. Waterproof boots.
127. Q. You mean rubber boots?
- A. No; waterproof leather. Hip-length boots are most important in the summer. Leather boots are better for marching and don't fill up with water like rubber boots do. The next important items are a mosquito mask and waterproof gloves.
128. Q. Do you have any drinking water problem?
- A. No. The best water I ever drank was from the river.
129. Q. Any dysentery?
- A. Yes, quite a bit. Many people died from this. I recommend boiling water for drinking, although I didn't do so. The bosses require the use of boiled water for the prisoners.
130. Q. How do you get water in the winter?
- A. Hack a hole probably 30-60 cm deep, or else use the snow.

- end -

Enclosures: Map of Pechara-Yorkula

Approved For Release 2003/11/21 : CIA-RDP80-00809A000500840138-4

CONFIDENTIAL



**CONFIDENTIAL**